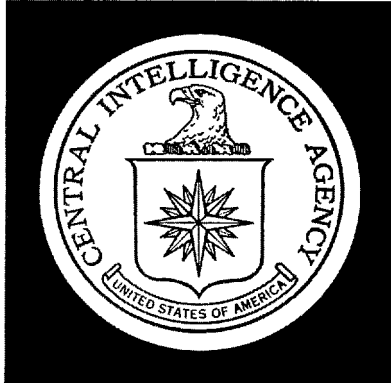


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

State Department review completed

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Information as of 1600
31 May 1967

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HIGHLIGHTS

US Marines are continuing to place heavy pressure on Communist forces and strategic positions in the area south of the Demilitarized Zone.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
US Marines of Operation PRAIRIE IV continued to press Communist forces immediately south of the DMZ by capturing a strategic position and destroying many defensive installations near Con Thien (Paras. 1-4).

A captured deserter from a South Vietnamese irregular force has admitted espionage activities while serving at the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp (Paras. 7-9). Weekly review of South Vietnam battle statistics* (Paras. 10-11).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
Both Premier Ky and Chief of State Thieu have recently been meeting with various political figures either to assess or to consolidate support for their respective presidential candidacies (Paras. 1-4).

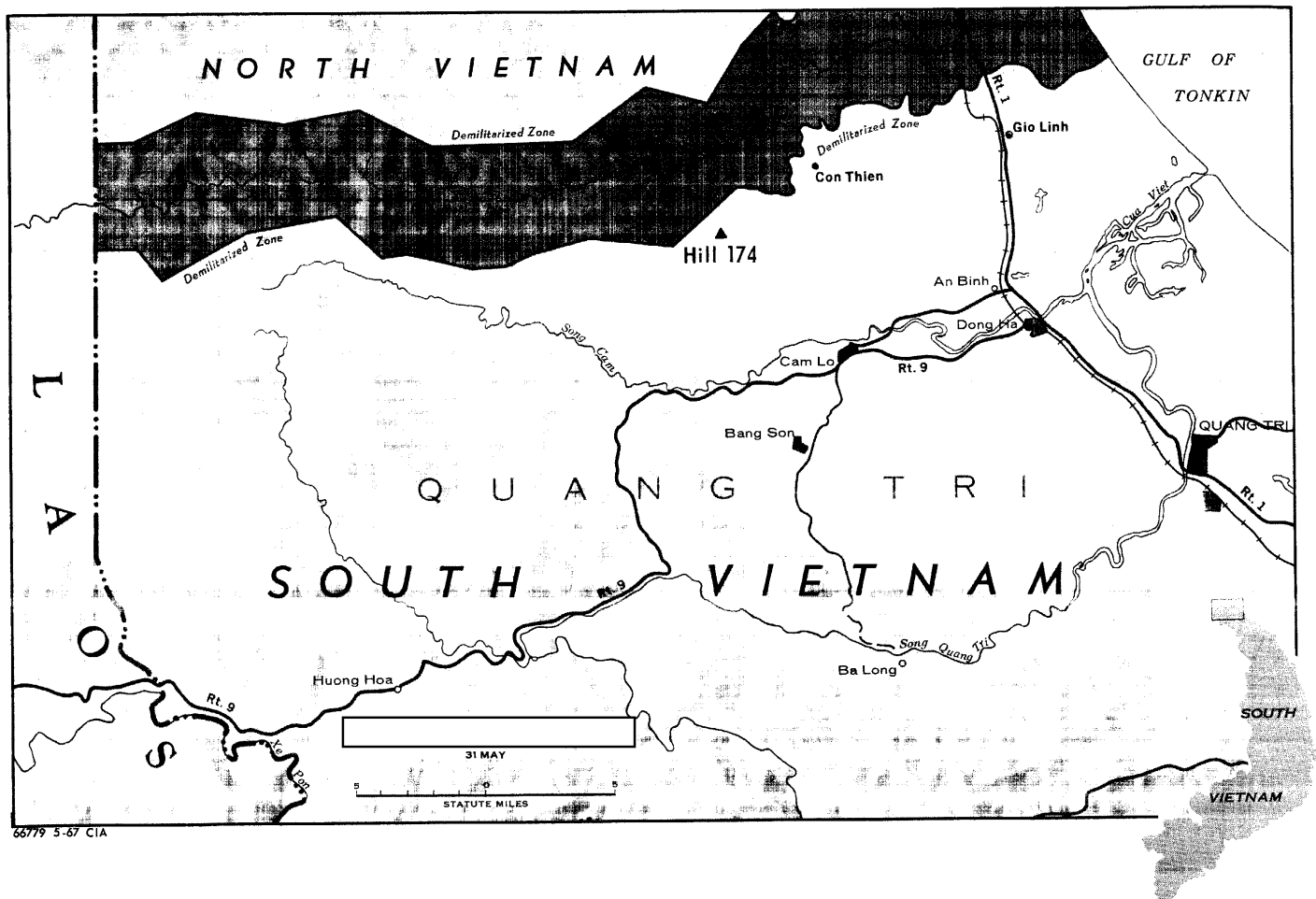
*Statistical graphics will be published on Thursday, 1 June, because of the holiday.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: There
is nothing of significance to report.

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. US Marines participating in Operation PRAIRIE IV in northern Quang Tri Province near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) reported several sharp, scattered skirmishes on 29-30 May. The Marines captured a strategic enemy position--Hill 174--from which Communist mortars have shelled allied positions at Con Thien.

2. The assault on Hill 174 was one of three drives by the Marines to force the Communist forces back from the Con Thien outpost. Other Marine units, moving west and southwest of Con Thien, encountered little enemy resistance as they located and destroyed many bunker and tunnel complexes that have served as defensive positions for the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars engaged in the recent heavy fighting in the area.

3. According to preliminary reports, cumulative American casualties during this two-day sweep of enemy positions near Con Thien were one killed and 45 wounded; Communist losses included seven killed.

4. Nearly 100 rounds of 105/120-mm. artillery fire were directed at the American 175-mm. artillery positions at Gio Linh on 30 May as the Communist forces continued their efforts to harass the major allied positions in northern Quang Tri Province.

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CIDG Recruit Acts as Viet Cong Informer

7. A montagnard irregular, who deserted to the Viet Cong during the 4 May Communist attack on the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp only to be captured by a South Vietnamese patrol on 23 May, stated that he and four other CIDG recruits at Lang Vei were actually Viet Cong agents. The five reportedly provided the Communists with a camp blueprint, killed guards within the camp, and actually led the enemy through the camp's perimeter on the night of 4 May.

8. The montagnard claimed that he was recruited by the Communists early this year to provide information of intelligence value on allied forces in western Quang Tri Province. The captive joined the CIDG forces in April as a penetration agent and shortly thereafter recruited the other four as agents, each assigned to a specific mission.

9. The Viet Cong have previously utilized this method of penetrating allied air bases and other installations to gather intelligence or to support enemy offensives against the target. Because of the difficulty either of identifying enemy agents inside allied positions or of ascertaining their success in such intelligence operations, it can be expected that incidents similar to the 4 May attack on Lang Vei will occur throughout the country.

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

10. A record-setting number of American wounded--2,616--has pushed the US casualty total for the week of 21-27 May to over 2,900, another record weekly high. This is the second consecutive week of record-setting American casualties and is attributed, at least in part, to the heavy fighting and continued enemy mortar and artillery attacks throughout northern I Corps and the western highlands of II Corps.

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11. The week of 21-27 May compared with the week of 14-20 May:

I. VIET CONG INCIDENTS

	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>
Attacks	39	45
Battalion or larger.	0 1
Small Unit3944
Harassment	369	488
Terrorism	42	42
Sabotage	25	20
Propaganda	3	9
Antiaircraft	<u>302</u>	<u>317</u>
Total Incidents	780	921

II. CASUALTIES

	<u>VC/NVA</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>
Killed	2,464	2,216	241	212
Wounded	--	--	705	539
Missing/ Captured	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>34</u>
Totals	2,464	2,216	964	785

	<u>US</u>		<u>FREE WORLD</u>	
	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>
Killed	337	313	50	29
Wounded	2,282	2,616	72	52
Missing/ Captured	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>
Totals	2,619	2,929	122	81

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III. WEAPONS CAPTURED

	<u>VC/NVA</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>	<u>14-20 May</u>	<u>21-27 May</u>
Individual	477	Not Reported	210	124
Crew-Served	<u>49</u>		<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	526		214	125

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Premier Ky met on 29 May with some of the political leaders who have offered him their organizational support: the Greater Solidarity Forces, National Union Party, Christian Democrat Party, the Nguyen Tuong Tam faction of the VNQDD (Nationalist Party), and a Hoa Hao faction represented by Colonel Bui Van Manh of the Peoples-Army Council. Tran Quoc Buu, president of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor (CVT), also attended the meeting but his support for Ky is not yet definite.

2. Of the groups represented at the meeting, only the CVT and the Greater Solidarity Forces appear to have viable, active organizations, according to the US Embassy. The National Union and Christian Democrat parties are poorly organized, and Colonel Manh has little following among the Hoa Hao. Tam's VNQDD faction is active, but its potential cannot be assessed at present. As of 30 May, a working group representing all elements present at the meeting was scheduled to start drawing up an organizational structure and to begin influencing other political groups that might be drawn into the Ky camp. Ky indicated at the meeting that he will give his supporters relative freedom in developing and running the campaign organization. One of Ky's principal objectives reportedly is a personally sponsored and supported slate of candidates for both houses of the legislature which could ride to victory on his coat tails.



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